

Claims:

1. A mattress, comprising:
a resilient body having at least one upper surface portion for supporting a person;
and
a plurality of surface channels disposed in the or each upper surface portion and extending parallel thereto.
2. The mattress of claim 1, wherein the body has an axis of elongation corresponding to the head-to-toe direction of the person lying, in use, on the mattress, and at least one upper surface portion is inclined relative to the axis of elongation.
3. The mattress of claim 2, wherein at least some of the surface channels have a component of direction, along at least a portion thereof, parallel to the direction of rising incline of the respective surface portion.
4. The mattress of claim 2 or 3, wherein at least some of the surface channels have a component of direction, along at least a portion thereof, parallel to the axis of elongation.
5. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein at least some of the surface channels extend substantially diagonally so as to make an angle of less than 90° with the axis of elongation.
6. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein at least some of the surface channels have a non-linear path, when viewed from above.
7. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein the body comprises sidewalls adjacent said at least one surface portion, the mattress further including at least one connecting channel, the or each connecting channel being in communication with a plurality of said surface channels and with at least one sidewall.
8. The mattress of claim 7, wherein the or each connecting channel is disposed in the or each upper surface portion.

9. The mattress of claim 7 or 8, wherein the or each connecting channel includes a connecting channel extending centrally parallel to said axis of elongation, and/or includes a connecting channel extending substantially transverse to said axis of elongation.
10. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein said surface channels have a transverse dimension at the surface of about 4 to 15 mm.
11. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein said surface channels spaced apart at the surface by about 5 to 20 mm.
12. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein said surface channels have a transverse cross-sectional area that varies along the length of the channel, for example increasing in size with proximity to the sidewalls of the resilient body.
13. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein said at least one upper surface portion includes a body surface portion for supporting, in use, the body of a person, a head surface portion for supporting, in use, the head of a person, and/or a top surface portion.
14. The mattress of claim 12, when dependent on claim 9, wherein the connecting channel extending substantially transverse to said axis of elongation extends along the lowermost region of said head surface portion.
15. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein, for one or more of the surface portions, said surface channels are provided over substantially the entire surface area thereof.
16. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein said surface channels are distributed over substantially the entire surface area of said surface portions.
17. A mattress substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 26 September 2005 (26.09.2005);
original claims 1-17 replaced by amended claims 1-17]

1. A mattress, comprising:
 - a resilient body having at least one upper surface portion for supporting a person; and
 - a plurality of shallow surface channels disposed in the or each upper surface portion and extending parallel thereto;
 - wherein at least one upper surface portion is upwardly inclined relative to the horizontal.
2. The mattress of claim 1, wherein the body has an axis of elongation corresponding to the head-to-toe direction of the person lying, in use, on the mattress, and at least one upper surface portion is inclined relative to the axis of elongation.
3. The mattress of claim 2, wherein at least some of the surface channels have a component of direction, along at least a portion thereof, parallel to the direction of rising incline of the respective surface portion.
4. The mattress of claim 2 or 3, wherein at least some of the surface channels have a component of direction, along at least a portion thereof, parallel to the axis of elongation.
5. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein at least some of the surface channels extend substantially diagonally so as to make an angle of less than 90° with the axis of elongation.
6. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein at least some of the surface channels have a non-linear path, when viewed from above.
7. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein the body comprises sidewalls adjacent said at least one surface portion, the mattress further including at least one connecting channel, the or each connecting channel being in communication with a plurality of said surface channels and with at least one sidewall.

8. The mattress of claim 7, wherein the or each connecting channel is disposed in the or each upper surface portion.
9. The mattress of claim 7 or 8, wherein the or each connecting channel includes a connecting channel extending centrally parallel to said axis of elongation, and/or includes a connecting channel extending substantially transverse to said axis of elongation.
10. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein said surface channels have a transverse dimension at the surface of about 4 to 15 mm.
11. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein said surface channels spaced apart at the surface by about 5 to 20 mm.
12. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein said surface channels have a transverse cross-sectional area that varies along the length of the channel, for example increasing in size with proximity to the sidewalls of the resilient body.
13. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein said at least one upper surface portion includes a body surface portion for supporting, in use, the body of a person, a head surface portion for supporting, in use, the head of a person, and/or a top surface portion.
14. The mattress of claim 12, when dependent on claim 9, wherein the connecting channel extending substantially transverse to said axis of elongation extends along the lowermost region of said head surface portion.
15. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein, for one or more of the surface portions, said surface channels are provided over substantially the entire surface area thereof.
16. The mattress of any of the preceding claims, wherein said surface channels are distributed over substantially the entire surface area of said surface portions.
17. A mattress substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.